CRASH RATES

Highway safety is a primary concern to New Hampshire residents and to those who visit. To many, the number of crashes on the highways is a primary safety indicator. The Crash Rate Map reflects the number of locatable crashes reported by police, divided by the traffic volume along a particular section of highway. The Statewide crash rate for 2003 is 2.78 crashes per million vehicle miles of travel (MVMT) (2004 travel data is not yet available to compute a crash rate for 2004).

In 1997, only 30% of all police reported crashes were locatable. Because of this low accuracy, the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) began an initiative to improve the accuracy of crash locations. In cooperation with the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency and the University of New Hampshire Technology Transfer Center, the NHDOT purchased one laptop for each local community with a police department. The NHDOT has computerized maps of the state, and crash-reporting software has been distributed along with the laptops to State and local police departments to facilitate the collection of crash data and improve its accuracy.

Since implementing these improvements, the total locatable crash percentage rose from 30% in 1997 to a high of 60% in 2001. The locatable crash percentage was 57% in 2002 and 58% in 2003 (information for 2004 is not yet available). It appears that the benefits from past improvements have leveled off, and renewed emphasis on further improvement is necessary. Continuing the effort to improve crash location data, the NHDOT, with support from the New Hampshire Department of Safety (NHDOS), the New Hampshire Highway Safety Agency (NHHSA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is automating the flow of crash data from the field. As these improvements are brought on line, the locatable crash percentage will increase over time.

The map ratings are an evaluation of a roadway's crash rate for only those crashes that are locatable. More accurate and complete crash location information allows a more reasonable comparison of a roadway's crash rate to the statewide average. Over time, such comparisons will become more valid as crash data location further improves. It is important to note that the map is just an indicator of possible safety concerns. Once a section is identified for further study, the selection must be studied more closely. Is the section of road a low traffic volume road with a minimal number of crashes? Were the reported crashes caused by vehicle, driver, or roadway factors? Further study of traffic volumes, historical data, and crash reports can help answer these questions.

The accompanying map indicates the following based on year 2003 Crash Information:

DESCRIPTION	MILEAGE	COLOR
Low Crash Rate	2696	Green
Moderate Crash Rate	135	Yellow
High Crash Rate	372	Red
Total	**3204**	

CRASH RATE

New Hampshire DOT
Department of Transportation
Bureau of Transportation Planning

0 5 10 15 20 25 Miles

Map Based on 2003 Data

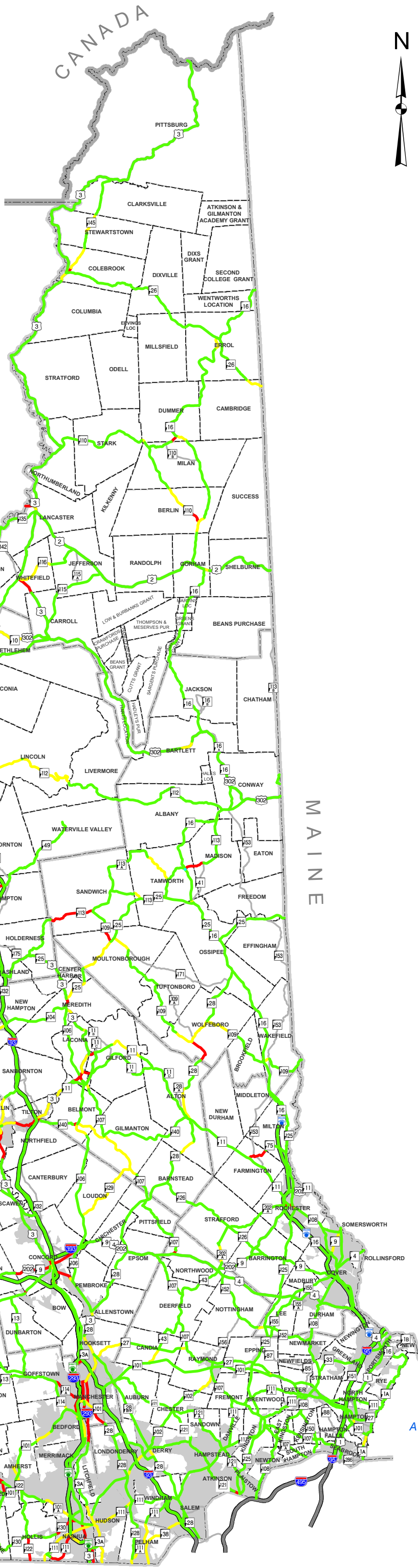
Accident rates shown on this map were based on all of the locatable accidents reported by police officers in 2003. Accident rates are based on the number of accidents and traffic volumes along a length of road. This rate information can be used to identify areas of concern for further study. Accident causes, including vehicle, human, and roadway factors, would need to be determined for those areas of concern before accurate determinations can be made as to the proper way to improve safety.

Accident rates do not warrant further investigation at this time. 2696 miles

Accident rates are not extremely high, but may warrant further investigation over time 372 miles

Accident rates warrant further investigation at this time 135 miles

Urban Areas (as defined by 2000 census)



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